

## IDAHO WOMEN WORKERS MAKE PROGRESS IN PAY INCREASES

Idaho's economic expansion during the 1990s and following the national recession in 2001-2002 improved opportunities for women, and many took advantage by looking for better, higher paying jobs.

Women still have a huge income gap to close with men, but Idaho women made substantial progress in bolstering their paychecks during the 1990s. In fact, women's pay kept pace with and has typically been ahead of inflation since 1990 while the average paycheck for men suffered significant cost-of-living erosion in both the early 1990s and during and after the national downturn.

As Idaho's unemployment rate steadily declined from over 6 percent in the early 1990s to well under 5 percent in 2000, more and more women entered the labor force as employers assessed pay and began making adjustments to deal with increasing difficulty in recruiting qualified, skilled workers from an ever-tightening labor pool.

The U.S. Census Bureau reported that 239,100 Idaho women worked in 1989, about 64.5 percent of the female working-age population. They made up 44.7 percent of the state's labor force.

By 2000, over 322,000 women were working in Idaho, 66 percent of the working-age population although they accounted for just 45.4 percent of the labor force.

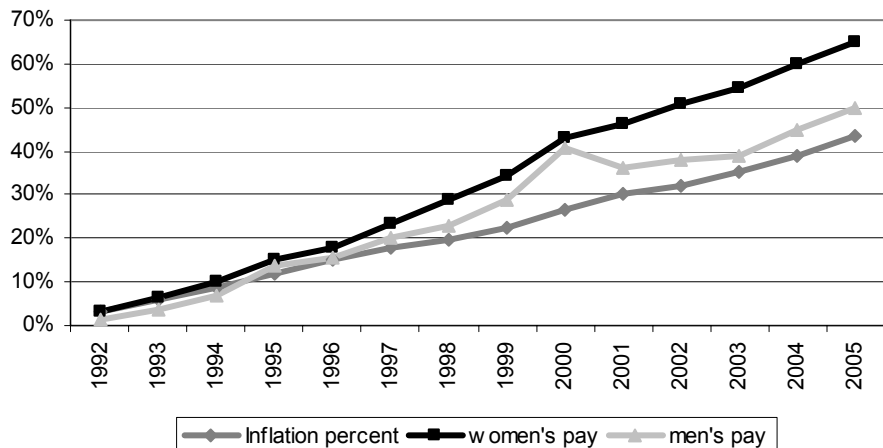
The same 10 years saw the percentage of working-age men in the labor force drop two points to 80.5 percent, likely a reflection of aging baby boomers opting for retirement.

In the same span of years, the average monthly wage for women as a percent of the wage paid men was gradually rising as the unemployment rate fell, the labor market tightened and employer competition for qualified, skilled workers intensified. Even during the national recession and immediately after, women's average paychecks grew.

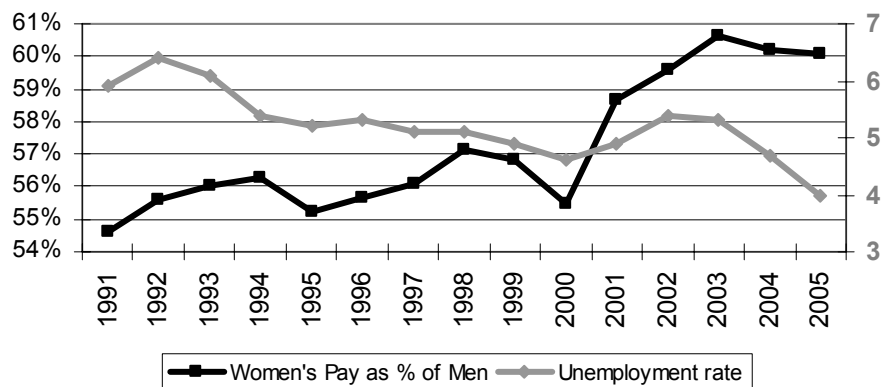
The monthly income for Idaho women in 1991 was less than 55 percent of men's, according to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. It requires employers to report total wages and number of employees but not whether they are full time or part time or whether wages include bonuses, severance or other one-time payments.

Social scientists attribute some of the discrepancy between male and female wage averages to a culture in which many women have traditionally stayed home to raise families, and if they worked at all they worked part-time at relatively lower-paying jobs. Those part-time pay-

FYI Graph 1: Men's, Women's Average Annual Pay Increase vs. Inflation, 1992-2005



FYI Graph 2: Women's Pay as Percent of Men's Pay Increase vs. Inflation, 1991-2005



checks depress the pay average. Then once families were raised, their absence as full-time participants in the labor force dulled skills these women learned earlier in life, leaving them without the experience and up-to-date training required for the better paying jobs in the economy.

That began changing in the 1990s. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that between 1990 and 2000 the number of women with full-time jobs — 35 hours or more for at least 50 weeks a year — jumped 56 percent while the number of men working full-time rose just 36 percent.

Women went from holding less than 33 percent of the state's full-time jobs to nearly 37 percent in 2000 and over 38 percent by 2005.

Their most significant gain has been at the top in the management of companies. In 2000, the Census Bureau estimated there were about 330 company management jobs in Idaho and women held nearly half of them. By 2005, the total of jobs was up to 474, and women occupied 84 percent, nearly 400.

Women also increased their presence in the utility, health care, public administration and mining sectors while remaining the dominant job holders in the finance, insurance, education and hotels and restaurants.

Those career gains have had some impact on pay-checks. According to the Census Bureau, over 55 percent of working women earned less than \$25,000 a year in 1999 compared to 31 percent of working men. Barely 36 percent of women earned between \$25,000 and \$65,000 while over 56 percent of men were in that salary range.

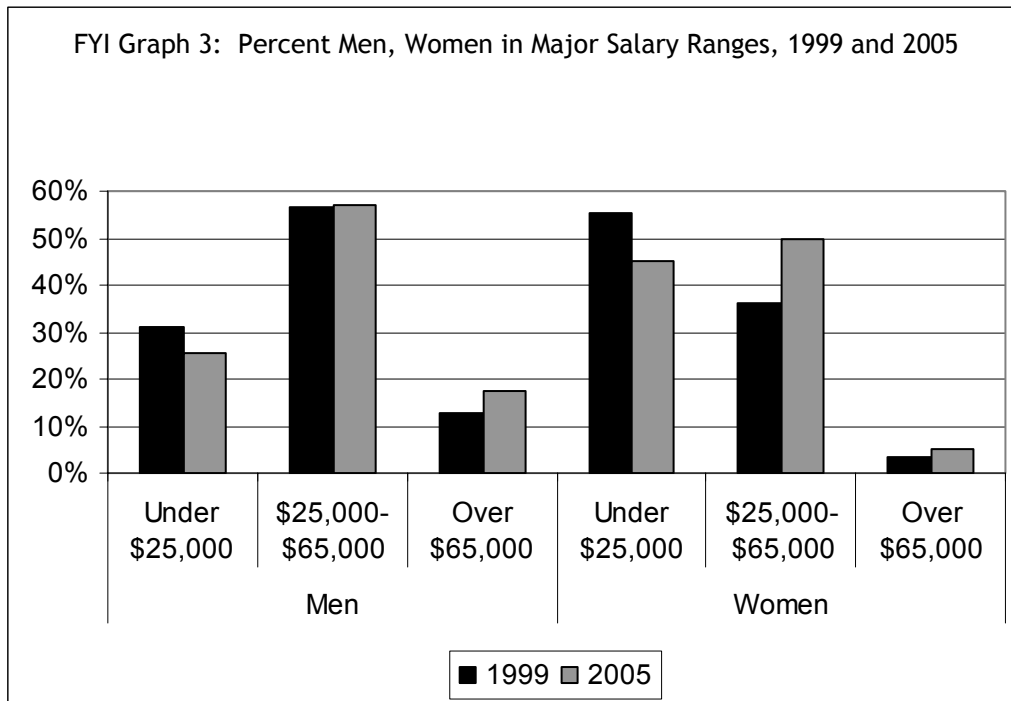
By 2005, half the working women were making between \$25,000 and \$65,000 a year while the men in that salary range remained under 57 percent, essentially unchanged from six years earlier.

Forty-five percent of working women made under \$25,000 in 2005, down 10 percentage points in six years. A quarter of men were still making under \$25,000 in 2005.

Men continue to dominate the upper pay range — 17.6 percent making over \$65,000 in 2005 compared to just 5.1 percent of women. But women in the higher pay range increased nearly 60 percent from 1999 compared to a 40 percent increase for men.

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See FYI Table 1: Average Monthly Wage for Idaho Men and Women, By Region on page 27.

# F.Y.I. Tables

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FYI Table 1: Average Monthly Wage for Idaho Men and Women, By Region

Year	Statewide		Northern Idaho		North Central Idaho		Southwestern Idaho	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1991	\$2,247.67	\$1,227.00	\$2,050.33	\$1,098.00	\$2,256.00	\$1,159.33	\$2,283.67	\$1,336.67
1992	\$2,274.75	\$1,265.00	\$2,097.00	\$1,124.25	\$2,315.75	\$1,194.75	\$2,311.25	\$1,389.75
1993	\$2,328.75	\$1,304.50	\$2,135.00	\$1,174.00	\$2,363.75	\$1,239.50	\$2,400.50	\$1,435.00
1994	\$2,405.00	\$1,352.75	\$2,208.25	\$1,225.00	\$2,384.50	\$1,287.50	\$2,530.00	\$1,498.75
1995	\$2,558.00	\$1,412.00	\$2,255.50	\$1,262.00	\$2,410.75	\$1,313.50	\$2,832.75	\$1,591.25
1996	\$2,598.25	\$1,446.75	\$2,364.00	\$1,308.25	\$2,483.25	\$1,349.75	\$2,818.50	\$1,615.75
1997	\$2,696.75	\$1,511.75	\$2,469.75	\$1,378.50	\$2,617.25	\$1,455.00	\$2,901.75	\$1,684.75
1998	\$2,763.00	\$1,578.75	\$2,537.25	\$1,440.00	\$2,639.50	\$1,521.25	\$2,987.25	\$1,760.50
1999	\$2,895.75	\$1,646.00	\$2,621.75	\$1,507.50	\$2,745.50	\$1,582.00	\$3,222.50	\$1,853.50
2000	\$3,159.50	\$1,753.00	\$2,693.50	\$1,574.50	\$2,862.25	\$1,682.25	\$3,621.75	\$1,985.00
2001	\$3,061.75	\$1,795.75	\$2,725.50	\$1,630.50	\$2,896.50	\$1,716.50	\$3,367.75	\$2,015.25
2002	\$3,100.25	\$1,848.00	\$2,768.50	\$1,676.50	\$2,934.25	\$1,790.25	\$3,395.00	\$2,067.25
2003	\$3,122.50	\$1,893.75	\$2,856.25	\$1,745.25	\$2,906.00	\$1,819.75	\$3,399.25	\$2,107.50
2004	\$3,259.50	\$1,961.75	\$2,987.75	\$1,814.25	\$3,020.25	\$1,869.75	\$3,556.25	\$2,176.75
2005	\$3,365.25	\$2,022.25	\$3,095.00	\$1,896.50	\$3,083.00	\$1,904.75	\$3,688.75	\$2,242.00

Year	South Central Idaho		Southeastern Idaho		East Central Idaho	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1991	\$1,904.67	\$1,087.33	\$2,205.33	\$1,115.00	\$2,641.67	\$1,229.00
1992	\$1,923.75	\$1,105.00	\$2,225.50	\$1,146.75	\$2,643.50	\$1,252.00
1993	\$1,957.50	\$1,132.75	\$2,238.25	\$1,179.75	\$2,663.25	\$1,272.00
1994	\$2,038.00	\$1,185.25	\$2,269.50	\$1,205.50	\$2,634.75	\$1,271.75
1995	\$2,129.25	\$1,244.75	\$2,365.50	\$1,258.50	\$2,562.00	\$1,250.50
1996	\$2,216.75	\$1,292.00	\$2,394.25	\$1,293.75	\$2,643.50	\$1,283.25
1997	\$2,382.75	\$1,337.50	\$2,477.25	\$1,363.00	\$2,715.25	\$1,338.00
1998	\$2,352.00	\$1,387.50	\$2,597.00	\$1,434.00	\$2,792.00	\$1,406.25
1999	\$2,441.50	\$1,452.00	\$2,677.00	\$1,477.75	\$2,671.00	\$1,396.50
2000	\$2,626.00	\$1,530.25	\$2,759.75	\$1,542.50	\$2,918.50	\$1,520.00
2001	\$2,551.00	\$1,578.00	\$2,866.75	\$1,599.00	\$2,999.50	\$1,576.75
2002	\$2,617.75	\$1,646.75	\$2,882.00	\$1,635.00	\$3,085.00	\$1,625.00
2003	\$2,649.75	\$1,703.25	\$2,905.50	\$1,684.00	\$3,147.25	\$1,667.25
2004	\$2,748.75	\$1,766.75	\$3,007.25	\$1,754.50	\$3,286.00	\$1,739.50
2005	\$2,617.25	\$1,832.00	\$3,137.50	\$1,811.50	\$3,277.25	\$1,765.50

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages